

nothing was decided upon before Jefferson returned to America, in a letter to Jay, of August, 1785, he argues for a naval force, "that the ship is the only weapon by which we can reach an enemy." On the re-establishment of a navy\* he saw objections; but in view of the aptitude of the American nation for seafaring and "their determination to continue as carriers on the water," these objections were more than offset by the advantages accruing.

Though removed from the immediate scene, his interest in the affairs of his native State was in no wise abated. He arranged for procuring a statue of General Washington, he consulted architects who furnished plans for a State-house in Richmond. Several letters passed between him and General Washington on the subject of improving the navigation of the Potomac and of running a canal through the Dismal Swamp. He followed the rise and growth of the desire on the part of the people of Kentucky to separate from Virginia, and satisfied himself that "the separation was expedient whenever the people of Kentucky should have agreed among themselves."

In national affairs, Jefferson, through his correspondence, kept himself thoroughly familiar with each step in the formation and adoption of the Constitution. His attitude on the subject of the Constitution was afterwards much misrepresented by his political opponents. The charge that he had opposed its adoption had no foundation. Though jealous for the State and for the integrity of its powers, no man appreciated better than he the urgent need of a general government of greater power and more compact form than the slipshod Congress of Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary days.

Jefferson did not confine his stay to Paris. In the second year of his residence abroad he crossed the channel and spent nearly two months in England, chiefly in the rural districts. In the hope that the waters of Aix in southern France would build up his health, which had been depleted by the breaking of his right wrist, he journeyed to that watering place. His route carried him up the Seine and down the Saone and the Rhone,

\*See Navy, page 316.

†See Con. Committee, page 167,